

MEETING MINUTES

HICKRC MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DATE: MARCH 5, 2014

TIME: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

LOCATION: CONFERENCE CALL: DIRECT CALL

CHAIRS: LORIE SMITH AND MARTHA VRANA-BOSSART

ATTENDEES: ANN TUCKER, CLAUDETTE HUMPHREY, DEAN BAILEY, LYNN DUBY, JANE DUBOIS, MICHAEL PAYNE, MISSY BOUTOT, TERRENCE MCCARTHY, JAMES BOUCHARD

ABSENT: Jan Huskins, SUE DALTON, LEE UMPHREY, CHARLENE O'CLAIR, HEATHER PELLETIER, NORMA DESJARDINS, JULIE SHACKLEY, REYNOLD RAYMOND, KIM GONZALES, LAURIE CHARBONNEAU, DAWN GALLAGHER

MEETING OBJECTIVES AND AGENDA:

1. ATTENDANCE
2. RFP AND NETWORK NARRATIVE REVIEW
3. HCF PROJECT UPDATE
4. NEXT STEPS
5. NEXT MEETING DATE

RISKS / MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Overall Meeting Objectives: engage rural and urban Healthcare Provider (HCP) sites and to initiate, plan, manage and close the HCF Project under the umbrella and leadership of the Health Information Connectivity Knowledge Rural Consortium.

Meetings are to be held on a regular, bi-weekly basis via conference call. Face-to-face meeting forums will be held adhoc. If regular a member is unable to attend, encouraged to make plans for a ¹proxy to attendee in their absence.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Lorie opened the meeting at 11:05 and welcomed everyone. Lorie shared that this meeting's focus is on the RFP and Network Narrative Review with a HCF Project Status Update.

A. Attendance - was taken and everyone welcomed.

B. RFP with Network Narrative Review – Martha / Lorie

It was explained that the foundation concept of the RFP being reviewed is that the HICKRC Consortium will be requesting RFPs from Telecommunication Carriers that will provide leased broadband services from current, broadband providers and that HICKRC did not propose to build/rent/or house HICKRC Network facilities for the purpose of a HICKRC network system.

Martha led the HICKRC group through the RFP and Network Narrative, explaining each section. The competitive bidding process was explained with the weighted criteria and all HICKRC members were ¹reminded that there must be a participant from their sites involved in the competitive bidding process. A short-list will be made according to the criteria spelled out in the RFP and then a review will be scheduled.

At the end of the RFP and Network Narrative review a time, the meeting was opened up for questions and feedback.

Terrence McCarthy asked about when funding for services was expected? Lorie explained that our HCF Project goal is to meet Funding Year 2014, which begins July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015, but this is dependent if all USAC Forms are submitted within their respective filing windows, and Funding Commitment Letters are received in timely fashion. If not, a proration for the first year broadband service requests could occur. Emphasis was noted on the importance of each HCP providing **signed** telecommunication carriers' contract soon after the competitive bidding process is completed to meet the F462 Filing window, which has a deadline of May 30, 2014. It was also explained that Funding Commitment Letters (FCL) must be obtained after F462 is filled before Invoice Submissions with F463 may be submitted to USAC for broadband services. The 35% match by the HCP site must be paid to the telecommunication carrier before submitting F463 and with the expectation that USAC to pay the remaining 65%.

James Bouchard raised the question about sites that were determined 'ineligible' by USAC, what would be their benefit? Lorie encouraged any site(s) that receives this type of USAC Eligibility Determination to stay engaged in the process, as after the competitive bidding process, if the proposed contracts between the HCP sites and the telecommunication carrier are deemed advantageous then, they would want to proceed; if not, then they are under no obligations to sign contracts with vendors where it is not financially advantageous for the HCP to proceed.

²Feedback on the RFP was discussed and any and all sites were encouraged to provide feedback to Martha.Vrana-Bossart@maine.gov prior to noon on March 12, 2014.

C. HCF Project Update – Lorie

Lorie provided a brief update of the HCF Project, scheduled, progress and F460 filing process.

USAC Eligibility Form 460 Update

- i. Lorie expanded on that USAC determines Rural or Non-Rural Status. Status may be impacted by: FQHC scope of work with HRSA, Grandfathered Status from other program involvement, FCC Pilot Program involvement, and Geocoding tool type: USDA, HRSA, USAC, U.S. Census Bureau, etc. none of these variables are known by the USAC Filer, therefore the importance of USAC's eligibility determination.
- ii. HCP Criteria: Non-profit or public, these criteria must be met to be an eligible participant and receive 65% reduced funding.
- iii. HCP Criteria: Eligibility Category Type; some category types were changed by USAC due to previous programs an HCP may have been involved in.
- iv. Eligible, Ineligible Participants and Proration of funds; one site will have prorated funding according to percentage ration of residential and outpatient percentages.
- v. USAC has 30 Days to Review F460; this could take our consortium into mid-March and if we have to re-file/re-register any HCP sites due to known, E-Filing system issues may be longer. An exemption to the USAC Form Filing Windows has been raised as of 3/5/2014 by Lorie with Paige Pierce at USAC.

D. Next Steps: March 19, RFP / Network Narrative Submission

Closing Comments – Submission of RFP and Network Narrative ASAP

The RFP and Network Narrative will be submitted to USAC for a pre-view to help decrease the length of the process to get the RFP posted on the www.usac.org website. ³If there's no HICKRC Member's feedback provided

by March 12, 2014, then to keep with the USAC filing process, the RFP and Network Narrative will be filed ASAP with F461 at USAC.

USAC E-Filing known system issues i.e. ineligible sites become un-attached from their LOA and need to be re-filed as an 'ineligible site' with a new LOA, new HCP#, new TPA elongating the F460 filing process.

E. **Next HIT Grant meeting** date: March 19, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. conference call.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

NEXT ACTION STEPS - BY WHOM

¹**Action item:** Proxy from HCP site to attend if regular member unable to attend and reminder to plan on having an **HCP Representative** available for review of RFPs during the competitive bidding process.

²**Action item:** **HICKRC Members** to provide feedback to Martha.Vrana-Bossart@maine.gov prior to noon on March 12, 2014 (if applicable).

³**Action item:** If there's no HICKRC Member's feedback provided by March 12, 2014, then to keep with the USAC filing process, the RFP and Network Narrative will be filed ASAP with F461 at USAC by a **HICKRC Consultant**.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Risk Factors: USAC E-Filing issues with known system issues i.e. ineligible sites become un-attached to LOA and need to be re-filed as an 'ineligible site' with a new LOA, new HCP#, new TPA elongating the F460 filing process.
- Mitigation Strategies: Lorie to take screenshots and capture all HCP's currently attached to LOAs on the E-File system for proof of documentation purposes. If required ask for 'filing window exemptions' due to E-File system issues.